



# PANHANDLE

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI, & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

Despite further job losses in its important forest products and mining sectors coupled with nervousness about the national economy, the Panhandle economy continued to grow as it entered 2001. Seasonally adjusted *Total Employment* rose 0.6 percent between December and January, and rose 2.7 percent between January 2000 and January 2001. Layoffs in the *Lumber & Wood Products* industry caused the Panhandle's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate to be two-tenths of a percentage point higher in January 2001 than in January 2000. See Panhandle Table 1 for details.

The Panhandle's traditional mainstay industries endured job losses during the last half of 2000 and in the first months of 2001. *Lumber & Wood Products* employment lost 60 jobs between December and January, as low lumber prices forced some mills to lay off workers. *Lumber & Wood Products* cut 260 jobs between January 2000 and January 2001. *Mining* lost 50 jobs between December and January. In addition, these numbers do not reflect the 130 jobs lost when the Sunshine mine closed, because the closure occurred in February.

*Service-Producing Industries* added 2,010 jobs between January 2000 and January 2001. *Transportation* added 30 jobs, growing 2.2 percent between January 2000 and January 2001. In the same period, *Communication & Utilities* added 80 net jobs; the Verizon call centers in Coeur d'Alene added more than 100 jobs, while electrical, gas, and sewage utilities reduced employment slightly. *Wholesale Trade* grew 2.3 percent between January 2000 and January 2001. Job gains at wholesalers serving retail stores and restaurants more than offset job losses at implement dealerships and other wholesalers serving farmers and loggers. *Retail Trade* employment saw its normal after-

Panhandle Table 1: Labor Force & Employment

	Jan 2001*	Dec 2000	Jan 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	89,980	89,370	87,390	0.7	3.0
Unemployed	7,510	7,400	7,110	1.5	5.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.3	8.3	8.1		
Total Employment	82,470	81,970	80,280	0.6	2.7
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	89,530	89,970	86,750	-0.5	3.2
Unemployed	10,030	8,110	9,330	23.7	7.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	11.2	9.0	10.8		
Total Employment	79,500	81,860	77,420	-2.9	2.7
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	64,750	67,110	62,550	-3.5	3.5
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	13,930	14,780	13,740	-5.8	1.4
Mining	960	1,010	960	-5.0	0.0
Construction	4,120	4,890	3,960	-15.7	4.0
Manufacturing	8,850	8,880	8,820	-0.3	0.3
Lumber & Wood Products	4,210	4,270	4,470	-1.4	-5.8
All Other Manufacturing	4,640	4,610	4,350	0.7	6.7
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	50,820	52,330	48,810	-2.9	4.1
Transportation	1,410	1,480	1,380	-4.7	2.2
Communication & Utilities	1,070	1,090	990	-1.8	8.1
Wholesale Trade	2,240	2,250	2,190	-0.4	2.3
Retail Trade	14,600	15,510	14,180	-5.9	3.0
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	2,550	2,540	2,450	0.4	4.1
Service & Miscellaneous	15,930	16,190	15,110	-1.6	5.4
Government Administration	7,680	7,750	7,380	-0.9	4.1
Government Education	5,340	5,520	5,130	-3.3	4.1
* Preliminary estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

Christmas reduction in employment. Between January 2000 and January 2001, it rose 3.0 percent. *Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate* grew 4.1 percent between January 2000 and January 2001, as banks and credit unions added 40 jobs, insurance agencies added 20 jobs, and real estate developers added 40 jobs.

*Services* grew 5.4 percent, adding 820 jobs, between January 2000 and January 2001. Tourist-related facilities, led by the tribal casinos and hotels in Worley and Bonners Ferry, added about 200 jobs between January 2000 and January 2001. The 2000-2001 winter tourist season has thus far kept up with the record-setting 1999-2000 winter tourist season. Private health care providers added 290 jobs to *Services* between January 2000 and January 2001, while community hospitals added 90 jobs to *Government Administration*. For the first time in eight years, temporary staffing agencies were not a source of new jobs. Panhandle manufacturers' first response to the national downturn in manufacturing was to cut temporary jobs.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Bonner County

- Coldwater Creek, the Sandpoint-based catalog company, eliminated 50 positions at its distribution center near Sandpoint and another 50 positions at its Coeur d'Alene call center in February. These permanent cut-backs were in addition to the seasonal layoffs Coldwater normally makes after Christmas. Like many other national retailers, Coldwater found U.S. consumers unwilling to make purchases in January and February. The resulting low sales for its spring catalog forced Coldwater to reduce staff.

### Kootenai County

- Ground Force Manufacturing LLC, a Seattle-based heavy equipment company, recently acquired Aresco, a Post Falls manufacturer that was close to shutting down. Like Aresco, Ground Force Manufacturing makes machinery used in mining. Ground Force currently employs 36 people in Post Falls. It soon will hire 10 or 15 more people. Ground Force plans to expand its Post Falls employment to more than 100 workers over the next five years. At Post Falls, Ground Force adds specialized equipment for mixing and delivering explosives, fire suppression, lubrication, and other purposes to large truck frames.
- Silverwood Theme Park plans to open the Northwest's largest water park in 2002. The 25-acre water park will feature water slides, a wave pool where people can body surf, a sandy beach, a continuous "lazy river" loop for inner-tubing, hot springs, and waterfalls. The water park would make Silverwood a two- or three-day destination for tourists. Currently, the park can host up to 10,000 people a day. The addition of the water park would allow it to host an additional 5,000 people a day.
- Silverwood will continue to expand and improve the original park. When it opens in May for Summer 2001, it will introduce a new magic show and add more ice-skating. In addition, visitors will encounter roving magicians, mimes and jugglers. In the next two years, the theme park plans to build another large wooden roller coaster.
- The Coeur d'Alene Tribe quietly opened its 94-room motel next to its casino near Worley in late December, and then celebrated its grand opening two months later. The grand opening also previewed future developments at the casino, including next year's \$8 million addition of 72 rooms to the hotel.
- The tribe will break ground this spring on a \$10 million project to build indoor and outdoor event arenas. The indoor arena will be just east of the casino. The outdoor arena, which will host rodeos and powwows,

will be located across U.S. 95 from the casino. The tribe is also building a \$7 million, 18-hole golf course directly behind the casino. It probably will open the driving range and three-hole practice course later this year and will open the full 18-hole course in early 2002. The golf course, set in the woods, will use the natural setting as part of the golfing experience. Other projects on the tribe's drawing board include an RV park with space for more than 100 RVs, a theme park, and a passenger train between Spokane and the casino.

- Kynrede Café, a 35-seat restaurant serving home-style cooking, recently opened in a restored 1920s house at 9551 Government Way in Hayden.

### Shoshone County

- Smelterville recently earned the designation of a Gem Community. The Idaho Department of Commerce awards the designation to Idaho communities that go through a vigorous economic planning process involving the whole community. A key element of Smelterville's plan is to develop a greenbelt and parks and to improve sewers and roads. Created in 1903, the city lies six miles west of Kellogg along Interstate 90 and has a population of 450 residents.
- Smelterville is also the home of the new Silver Valley Industrial Park, whose first building soon will be under construction. PBI Construction, of Spokane, will break ground in the next few weeks on the \$1 million, 14,000-square-foot facility. The park's first tenant will be a Tele-Servicing Innovation (TSI) call center that will employ more than 100 people. While waiting for its new building, TSI is leasing quarters in Coeur d'Alene and employs 40 Silver Valley residents, whom TSI buses to Coeur d'Alene.

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Kathryn Tacke, Labor Market Analyst  
1221 W. Ironwood Drive, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
(208)769-1558 ext. 340  
E-mail: ktacke@labor.state.id.us